
THE STAR OF THE EAST

A JOURNAL DEALING WITH THE SYRIAN CHURCH IN
INDIA AND THE OTHER EASTERN CHURCHES.

The Second Vatican Council Special Number.

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H. H. Late Pope John XXIII
of The Second Vatican Council Fatma



H. H. Pope Paul VI
The Present Pope.



H. B. Archbishop Makarios,
The Archbishop and President of Cyprus.

We regret very much the delay in bringing out this issue, which was due to the failure of current in the printing press as the result of the drought throughout the land for several months. It even necessitated a change of press.

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EDITORIAL

The Raison D'etre of this Special Number.

The Second Vatican Council is a unique event in Christian history. Since the Great Schism in 1054 and the reformation in the 16th century, the separated churches have been going on in their own ways often fighting with each other relentlessly without any regard to the great name by which they were known. The Body of Christ had been rent to pieces to the great detriment of the mission to which she has been called. Though individual churches have done their work in their own ways the fundamental unity of the church had been lost and the witness of the Church to the One Lord and God has been made very ineffective. The discordant notes struck by conflicting churches in the mission fields have been a great scandal and have created in the minds of non-Christians doubt as to whether they were preaching one and the same God. Could there be a greater tragedy than this?

The two great world wars fought in Christian lands and between Christian nations have brought them great disrepute and almost irreparable harm. The appearance of communism which followed them in their wake has even shaken the very foundation of the Christian Church. Some great historians have even attributed the incidence of communism to the prevailing atheism in some of the established churches. These phenomena have made Christians to rethink their own position. They came to the unanimous conclusion, either they have to set their houses in order or disappear from the world scene.

It was this background that gave birth to the World Council of Churches. Hundreds of Churches which have been often at loggerheads came together under the banner of Jesus Christ. Faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, they realised, was sufficient basis for their co-operation. The WCC was formed and it was found to be a more effective organization than the United Nations, for whose foundation the WCC was in no small measure responsible. For the first time the Third Assembly of the WCC was held in a non-Christian land. New Delhi has given the churches a greater sense of their mission. The Russian Church with a membership of 50 millions joined the WCC at New Delhi and added to it the weight of entire Eastern Christianity. The Roman Catholic Church also for the first time sent official observers to the New Delhi Assembly.

When the Orthodox, Anglican and Protestant Churches were so definitely moving together in one direction, while communism was opening its mouth so wide to swallow the whole bunch, it was almost impossible for the Roman Catholic Church to remain silent. In fact more literature was produced about the WCC in the Roman Catholic Church than in any member churches of the WCC. That shows the interest the Roman Catholic Church took in that world movement and its awareness of the influence it was exercising in world affairs. When H. H. Pope John XXIII came to the throne, he declared his intention to call together an ecumenical council. He has himself said that it was due to the internal promptings of the Holy Spirit that he set his mind on such an enterprise. And with unbounded devotion he set his shoulders to the task. To make the arrangements he appointed a secretariat for Unity at the Vatican with Cardinal Bea at its head. Preparations have been going on for the last three years. Observers have been invited from all the churches. All churches readily responded with rare exceptions as the council met in last October.

The great consideration the Pope had shown to the observers, the generosity with which he treated them and the trend of discussions that have taken place, indicate that the churches have come closer together. The observers have given clear expressions

of this at the receptions given in their honour. The declaration made by H. H. the Pope in open session that the church has nothing to be kept secret and its only concern is truth and truth alone has considerably enabled the chasms that existed in their minds to be bridged.

The first session was over last December and the next session will begin in next September. There is a general expectation that great things will happen in future. The Orthodox Syrian Church in Malabar and the Indian Christians in general have no easy access to the literature relating to the Vatican Council and had very little opportunity to know what really happened in Rome from last October to December when the council was in session. It is only in the hope of giving as much information as possible about so important an event to people in general in India both Christians and nonchristians, that we have launched upon the plan of publishing this special number. There may be many shortcomings in our endeavour. But our only interest is, that in a small measure at least to help the consummation of this great endeavour.

The Tense Moments in the Vatican Council.

The great gathering in the basilica of St. Peter's consisting of the representatives of the various churches must have been a very impressive sight. Never in its long history had such an assortment of confessions been officially present under its great dome. As an English poet has said, "Bishops were plenty as tabby cats and deans were two a pence." With few exceptions the vast assembly of bishops was identically arrayed in white copes and tall white unadorned linen mitres. The cardinals were vested in simple white silk chasuble of identical pattern. When the Holy Father entered the church the vast array stood up to make their obeisance and among many who knelt were many Methodists, Lutherans Disciples and Anglicans as a spontaneous act of respect. The rain that continued all night ceased as the day dawned.

The Votive Mass of the Holy Ghost was offered by Cardinal Tisserant, Dean of the Sacred College, recently elected, a French Academician. The Sistine Chapel choir was in attendance. The Mass ended the Pope made the profession of faith in

a lively unclerical voice which is one of his most endearing personal characteristics. His simple absorption in the deep things of the service made him a most sanctifying figure in the whole function. Then the cardinals made their obeisance and one could not help noticing the advanced averages of their ages.

The Pope's allocution won the hearts of all. The very way he addressed them as brethren in Christ made them feel a sort of oneness and not separation. One of the most vivid passages was a rebuke to those who were unfavourably comparing the present with the past. Prophets of gloom whose prophecy had no firmer foundation than this were not to be listened to. He also advocated the separation of the Church and State so that religious liberties may be kept in tact. During the discussion of the subjects the Holy Father had made clear that the church has nothing to be kept secret and that truth and truth alone is the primary concern of the church. This declaration has really dispelled the many misgivings that prevailed in the minds of separated brethren.

When the "schemata", the subjects for discussion, were taken up, the different views expressed on important subjects, was an eye opener to many as to the latitude of individual opinion prevailing in the Roman Catholic Church. When the question of union between Orthodox and Eastern Churches came up the "right wing" under Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, held that the reabsorption of the Eastern Churches and the individual conversion of the Protestants was the right thing to do. The opposition definitely held that the Churches of the East were older than Rome and owed nothing to her. They had received their Orthodox traditions straight from the Apostles and all questions of union should therefore be approached with humility on both sides. In a divided church, the question was posed who were the "separated brethren"? So the whole scheme was dropped and postponed to the next meeting to be presented in a different form. It is good for the militant propagandists in this country to take to heart the enlightened opinion in Rome before they shower anathemas on poor struggling churches in the East. The same division of opinion was noticeable on the schemata on Two Founds of Revelation. At last the proposition "the consideration of the schema be discontinued" was put to vote and

was carried by 1300 to 800. This being a doctrinal motion two-thirds majority was needed and so by the council's own rules the discussion continued. It looked as though the reactionaries had won but on the following day the Pope had intervened and set aside the majority rule. So it has been said "the autocratic intervention of the Pope saved the democratic council from the effect of its own principles"

These are all tense moments in the historic Second Vatican Council. From all what transpired in the first session of the council, it may not be wrong to say, that the beginning has started of the end of the Latin domination of the Roman Church. What is in store for her and other churches in future God alone can say.

Why the Orthodox have not sent Observers to the Vatican Council

The general response to the papal invitation to the Vatican Council was on the whole satisfactory. To all well meaning Christians, whatever be their denomination, the divided condition of the church is heart-rending. The church as the light and the heaven is found helpless in its divided condition to save the world from the catastrophe of a nuclear war and sudden destruction. Churches are groping to find a way out. At this juncture people are only glad to follow any real leadership that might ensue. Though doubt was raised in certain Protestant circles as to the ultimate value of the participation in the council, the Protestant response on the whole was favourable. For the first time in the last 400 years the Archbishop of Canterbury called on the Pope. This was followed by the visits of the Presiding Bishop of the Episcopal Church in America and the Presidents of certain Protestant organizations. These visits had helped to create a favourable atmosphere in reformed church circles to accept the invitation. It was very unfortunate that the Ecumenical Patriarch at Istanbul could not find his way to send observers to the Council. The reasons for his inability to cooperate has been made clear through certain of his pronouncements.

An ecumenical council according to the Orthodox conception must be a council of the whole church. Due to the modern divided condition of the church, it cannot be held. By the Orthodox participating in a purely local council, the impression may be

given that they have accepted it as ecumenical. According to the Roman conception a council summoned by the Pope is ecumenical which also the Orthodox cannot accept.

Quite different from the western Protestant orders, Rome accepts the Eastern order as valid and so the Orthodox bishops have to be treated as bishops in fulness of Apostolic authority and Rome cannot do this in view of the attitude of Orthodox to the Roman claims.

Over and above all these, there is another important fact on the part of the Orthodox hierarchy in declining to send official observers to the council. The setting up of Eastern rites and rival Patriarchs are an intrusion into the independence of the Eastern churches is the common feeling all over the East. Very often the underhand methods employed in winning converts to Rome are beyond their comprehension. The material backwardness of the Eastern churches in general, the disorganised condition of some of them very often their ignorance are taken advantage of for proselytism. It is unbelievable how Rome flouts church discipline to get easy converts from other churches. Some of the recent oriental rites are the ones who freely revel in such games. Any man who is brought under church discipline is easily offered a place in their churches. A discontented married person, if changes over can easily get married, even when the other party is alive. Widower priests, who cannot marry again in Eastern churches are allowed to marry again, if he accepts Roman allegiance. Instances after instances of such cases can be furnished. How can churches function if such leeways are made possible. After the Second Vatican Council has met and the wind of ecumenism is blowing all over the world, the perpetration of such irregularities cannot be construed as wellmeaning. Rome should cease to support such enterprises with men and money. The spirit of Christ should prevail in all church transactions. It is high time to realise that if five converts are made by low methods, some fifty would be repelled from church once for all. Our Lord never made a single convert by any cheap methods. If the churches could follow His Example it will be a great day in the history of the church.

It is on account of these and other factors that the Orthodox Church desisted to send observers. Let us hope that time will

soon come when the ground would be made clear that the Eastern Churches also could participate in an ecumenical encounter under the initiative of the Church of Rome. Perhaps such participation might help to cure some of the problems which prevent them from doing it.

H. B. Archbishop Makarios' visit to the Syrian Church.

There are certain kings and queens who are also at least formal heads of churches. But there is hardly any Bishop who is the head of a state with perhaps the exception of the Pope. But in Archbishop Makarios we have a Bishop who won the headship of a state by fighting relentlessly for its freedom, and winning it at great hazards. By common consent he has been elected the head of the state. India heartily supported Cyprus in her freedom struggle. It must have been an act of personal regard on the part of the Archbishop-President to pay an official visit to India.

It is not often that state visitors come all the way down south from New Delhi to visit Kerala. For the Archbishop to do it was also to visit the ancient apostolic church of India. It was at the same time that the Apostle Paul went to Cyprus that St. Thomas also came to this land. As both the churches of India and Cyprus are of apostolic foundation and of the same age there is an affinity between them. This close affinity the great Archbishop as the President of Cyprus clearly demonstrated by visiting this state of all the states in India and giving expression to it by his kind words.

One of the first things he did in Kerala during his brief itinerary was to attend the holy worship in the Syrian church in the state capital. in the presence of H. H. the Catholicos, the head of the church. H. B. the Archbishop addressed the vast congregation expressing his satisfaction to see fellow Christians in this distant nonchristian land. Later in the afternoon a reception was given by H.H. the Catholicos to the distinguished visitors, at which a large number of distinguished people in the state, both christians and nonchristians were present. The Hon. Minister Sri E. P. Paulose, who is also a member of the church welcomed the distinguished guests. H. B. the Archbishop responded in felicitous terms.

An isolated church like the Orthodox Syrian Church very seldom in its long history had the opportunity to welcome such distinguished prelates. The Government of India has very wisely fixed Kerala in his itinerary. The Kerala University has also made use of the occasion to confer an honorary degree on the Archbishop. Visits like this will not only foster friendly relations between states but will also further friendly relations with churches. May the island thrive under an Episcopal President.

The Royal Greek Visitors:-

It has been said of the visit of King Paul of Greece with Queen Frederica and Princess Irene that since Alexander the Great's visit in 326 B. C. to India, this is the first Greek king to visit India. Alexander the great though young was a man of great vision. He looked for the unity of humanity through friendship, intermarriage etc. His retinue consisted of Greeks and Indians. The visit of King Paul also has helped tremendously to recollect the very long cultural relationship between India and Greece from prechristian times. Chandragupta Maurya, Bindusara and Asoka maintained intimate connection with the Greek kingdom of the west. Megasthenes and Daimachius lived in Mauryan court as ambassadors. Megasthenes says that at Pataliputra there was a special department which looked after foreigners. Bindusara is stated to have requested for figs and sweet wines from Greece. The Greeks in their turn have considerably influenced the Indian culture-drama, art, astronomy etc. Making horoscopes the Indians got from the Greeks. Indian influence on the Greeks was also remarkable. Gnosticism and Neoplatonic school of Alexandria reveal traces of Hindu influence. Clement of Alexandria went to the extent of saying that the Greeks stole their philosophy from the barbarians. An Indian philosopher is stated to have visited Socrates. Zenob says that there was an Indian colony in upper Euphrates in the 2nd century B. C. Many scholars hold that the later Greek physicians were acquainted with the medical works of Hindus. It is in realization of these facts that King Paul in a felicitous speech in New Delhi said, "India is the cradle of human thought." President Radhakrishnan rightly mentioned that the spirit of reason, the spirit of democracy and emphasis on values brought India and Greece closer together. He also pointed out

that Dr. Westcott said, 'Greece and India are the most metaphysical countries in the whole world'. He also said that the Greeks are always young. Greece with her perennial vigour will not soon forget her very old association with India. We extend to the royal family all good wishes.

THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

An impression from a distance.

The Rev. Dr. C. T. EAPEN, *Editor, The Star of the East.*

H. H. Pope John XXIII has really made history in calling together the Second Vatican Council, the largest of such councils ever held. Not only in numbers but also in the diversity of people attending, it made history. Besides some 3000 fathers of the council and 1000 press men there were nearly 400 observers representing Lutheran, Methodist, Disciples, Anglican and Orthodox Churches. They had seats closer to the throne of the Pope than the cardinals. The Holy Father in his allocution addressed them as Brethren in Christ, which made them feel their oneness. As the Pope entered the basilica of St. Peter along with the thousands of the Roman Catholics who knelt, the Protestants also to the amazement of many, spontaneously knelt in respect. The Confession of Faith which the Pope made at the end of the Mass was very touching. The whole scene reminded one of the prediction Dr. Heller made several years ago of the advent of a Pope who will be a Franciscan, and will invite the representatives of the various separated churches to Rome and girding his loins would wash their feet as the Master once did.

This is the first meeting of the kind to be held in almost two centuries and the twenty first in two thousand years' history of the Roman church. The First Vatican Council was summoned by the Pope Pius IX in June 26, 1867 and came together after consulting 55 cardinals and Bishops on Dec. 8, 1869. When it adjourned on July 17, 1870 by a vote of 533 to 2 the dogma of Papal Infallibility was passed. But before the vote was taken 106 council member had left. But between the First Vatican Council

and its predecessor, the Council of Trent, there was a gap of more than 300 years. Trent ran from Dec. 1545 to Dec. 1563. It consisted mainly of Italian bishops and its final decrees were subscribed to by 215 members. Of the 1037 prelates who were eligible to attend the first Vatican Council, over 700 were present when the meeting opened and the total rose to 766, of whom 276 were Italians.

The Second Council is a great contrast to its predecessor. Some 2813 prelates are entitled to attendance. Some could not attend it due to old age and infirmity and others are kept at home due to political reasons. Italy still has the largest share of eligibles—313, as compared with 415 for all the rest of Europe except Russia and Baltic countries.

It has been said that it was by a divine inspiration that the Pope had thought of the council. Prior to the meeting of the council the Pope made pilgrimages to Assisi and Loretto. The visit to Assisi many could understand but that to Loretto, which is one of Italy's great national shrines many could not appreciate. The shrine of the house is believed to have been borne by angels from Nazareth to Italy via Trieste. The Pope in his speech at Loretto made clear that it was to renew his faith in the Incarnation and to express his devotion to the Holy Family that he visited the shrine.

It took three years to get ready for the council, Pope John's first move in preparation for the council was to appoint Cardinal Tardini, head of a preliminary commission. In June 1959 the commission sent a circular letter to all prospective participants asking them to speak frankly and clearly as to what problems the council could deal with. The Roman Curia, faculties of theology and canon law in Catholic Universities throughout the world were also invited to give their opinion in the matter. When the commission finished its work it found 9000 separate proposals for doctrinal or disciplinary action or clarification. A Protestant paper has remarked that it could be nothing but the continued work of the Holy Spirit that 8992 suggestions could be offered for the improvement of the "one, true, complete and perfect church".

The second step was the appointment of ten preparatory commissions. The subjects assigned to them were—theological, questions, prerogatives of bishops and the government of dioceses.

regulations for the clergy and people, religious orders, regulations concerning the sacraments, the sacred liturgy, the seminaries, the Eastern churches, the mission and lay apostolate including Catholic Action. No layman has been asked to be a member of the commission on the lay apostolate.

The central commission of 117 cardinals, bishops and heads of religious orders working directly under the Pope has collated the work of the ten commissions and recommended to him which of the issues deserve the attention of the council. The popes himself determined the agenda. Pope John himself has declared that the Roman Curia is not responsible to the council but is only one factor in it.

The Second Vatican Council comes closest to universality of any held by the church. Ninety per cent of all Roman Catholics are found in Europe and in Americas, but only 70 per cent of the council members come from these countries. The other 30 per cent come from Africa, Asia and Oceania.

Though observers are invited, it was strictly a Roman Council. Its object is "To renew the image of the church in the eyes of the people and bringing up to date the dogmatic concepts." The intention of the Pope to restore the glory of the church was very evident in the very opening session. Heavy rain all through the previous night drenched the city. As it dawned the rain disappeared and people began to gather round St. Peter's. The regular delegates were nearly 3000, the observers 400, the press representatives nearly 1000. Behind the altar and in the transepts on both sides sat the diplomatic corps accredited to the Vatican along with the Italian aristocrats and their wives, papal knights and nobles. It is said that the gold braid things worn would sink an aircraft carrier. The lower levels were occupied by priests and nuns, press representatives and others. In front of the altar to the Pope's right were the crimson seats reserved for the college of cardinals, on the left were a number of photographers. In front of the Pope and stretching both sides of the central aisle almost to the door were the 2500 seats for the members of the council. The Protestant observers were seated on each side of the main aisle nearer the throne than the cardinals, or the diplomatic corps. In their midst sat the two Russian Orthodox observers, who arrived at the last moment.

As the bishops arrived and took the seats, choir and organ alternately filled the vast nave with harmonies. As the Pope arrived it is said that even some Protestant and Orthodox observers knelt as the thousands along the papal way had done. It was a spontaneous act of courtesy on the part of the observers.

The Pope sat down on the high throne. He looked pale but alert and quick in his movement. His voice was strong as he celebrated the mass and later delivered an allocution. Before him sat three times as many prelates as had ever before met in a Catholic council joining in responses to the glory of God.

The Holy Father said in his address, "Heaven and earth are closely joined. The council now beginning rises in the church as a daybreak, a fore runner of most splendid light. We might say that the heaven and earth are united in the celebration of the council." The address was remarkable for its moderation, for its repudiation of the prophets of gloom and the affirmation that "in the present order of things divine providence is leading us to a new order of human relations, which by men's own efforts and beyond their very expectation is directed towards the fulfillment of God's superior and inscrutable designs, and everything, even human differences, leads to greater good of the church."

At a press conference in the Sistine chapel two or three days after the beginning of the council the Pope affirmed that the church "has nothing to hide," and "wants nothing so much as the truth." Bishop Fulton Sheen of the U. S. A. pointed out that the role of the press should be "supportive and promotional rather than evaluative and analytical."

What were the achievements of the council? Since the separation in the 16th century, this must have been the first occasion when the separated brethren had the chance to come together with the mother church. The very way H. H. the Pope addressed the council as brethren in Christ, struck a note of fundamental oneness. The very seats arranged for the Protestant observers nearer the throne than those of the cardinals, has helped to bridge the great chasm that existed in the minds by centuries of anathemas, and mutual recriminations. The speeches made by the Protestant representatives gave clear expression of the oneness they felt. The informal, personal contacts, which brought people together after long years of separation was more than any

thing else the greatest achievement of the council. This may be said of the great assemblies of the World Council of Churches.

Seen in this light one could not but regret the absence of Orthodox observers from the council. Too many may have been the short comings of the past. Some of them may be even too difficult to forget soon. Yet it was with the earnest desire to open a new chapter in church relations that Rome welcomed separated churches to its council. The meeting might have helped to overcome grievances which could not otherwise be done. For the restoration of the glory of God no sacrifice will be too great. We have to show the other cheek and go a second mile. Let us hope that the Orthodox Church would find its way to cooperate, when the second session begins. Rome also should not leave any stone unturned to bring in the Orthodox Church also into the ambit of its new endeavour. The Baptist Union also which did not send observers should rethink its position.

Twenty SCHEMATAS have been given out for consideration. Of these only five have been taken up—those on Liturgy, the two sources of revelation, modern means of communication, Unity I (the oriental churches), and the nature of the church. The schemata are documents containing propositions and materials for debate. They varied in length. That on Liturgy had 105 sections, the nature of the church 55, Unity I 52.

The schema on liturgy was first read and was given a general approval by a very large majority and committed to its appropriate commissions for revision, and amendment in accordance with the opinion expressed in the debate. The main changes achieved have been the wider use of vernacular in the Mass for catechumens and a general permission to incorporate certain local customs into the mass under the careful regulation of the episcopate. Proposals have included the rethinking of the Sacrament of Unction to be a regular means of healing for life rather than anointing for death, communion in both kinds in certain special circumstances, concelebration by priests, a fixed Easter, reduction of breviary for parish priests to two offices instead of seven.

The schema on the two sources of revelation, was thoroughly debated. The debate was made a trial of strength of the two

main schools of thought in the Roman Catholic church. The schema as it stood appeared to be too much influenced by the reactionary hands of Cardinal Ottaviani (the Grand Inquisitor). The more modern view was represented by Cardinal Bea, the former head of the Biblical Institute. The schema was accused of being too reactionary, too scholastic, and not sufficiently ecumenical. It seemed to express certain mentality of Latin races which had dominated the church for too long. So it was proposed that the consideration of the schema be discontinued. The implication was that another would be substituted. The negative motion was carried by 1300 to 800 votes. But being a doctrinal motion two-third majority was needed and so the decision was ineffective.

It appeared that the reactionaries had won. But the following morning the Pope had intervened to set aside "the majority rule"; The Theological Commission and the secretariat for Unity have been asked to sit down together and work out a new schema more attuned to the mentality of today.

During the discussion on means of communication it was decided that more use should be made of expert laymen.

The third schema to be considered was union with the Orthodox and other Eastern Churches. Here again there were two schools of thought. The one upheld the reabsorption of the Eastern Churches and individual conversion, of Protestants. Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster was a spokesman of this. The other said that the Churches of the East were older than Rome, and owed nothing to her. They had received their Orthodox tradition straight from the Apostles and all questions of union should be approached with humility by both sides. In a divided church who were "the separated brethren"? It is in the discussion of such things as in other ways, that it was made clear how much wider the main stream of Roman Catholic life is than that - which is seen in only a local acquaintance with it. It was at last decided to combine this schema with that drawn up by the secretariat for Unity and the chapter in "De ecclesia" on "Ecumenism". This work will be done by a subcommission and the combined effort will be submitted to the reassembled council in September.

The discussion on De Ecclesia was unfinished, when the council adjourned. Here too the two schools of thought were in

evidence. The left criticized the right whose handiwork prevailed in the prepared text, of making their connection of the church appear too "triumphal", too "juridical" and too "scholastic" instead of being "humble", "evangelical", "pastoral" and charitable. Let us hope that the Holy Spirit will prevail in restoring the true image of the Church.

THE OPENING ADDRESS,

H. H. POPE JOHN XXIII.

The Mother Church rejoices that, by a singular gift of Divine Providence the longed-for day has finally dawned, when, under the auspices of the Virgin Mother of God, whose maternal dignity is commemorated on this feast, the Ecumenical Council Vatican II is being solemnly opened here beside St. Peter's tomb.

All the Councils—both the 20 ecumenical ones and the numberless others, also important, of provincial or regional character that have been held down through the years all prove clearly the vigor of the Catholic Church and are recorded as shining lights in her annals.

In calling this vast assembly of bishops, the latest and humble successor of the Prince of the Apostles who is addressing you intended to assert once again the Church's magisterium (teaching authority) which is unfailing and endures until the end of time: in order that this magisterium, taking into account the errors, the requirements, and the opportunities of our time, might be presented in exceptional form to all men throughout the world.

It is but natural that, in opening this universal Council, we should like to look to the past, and to listen to its voices, whose echo we like to hear in the memories and the merits of the early and later pontiffs, our predecessors; solemn and venerable voices, throughout the East and the West, from the fourth century to the Middle Ages, and from there to modern times, which have handed down their witness to those Councils; voices which proclaim in perennial fervor the triumph of that divine

and human institution, the Church of Christ, which from Jesus takes its name, its grace, and its meaning.

Side by side with these motives for spiritual rejoicing, however, there has also been extended for more than 19 centuries a cloud of sorrows and of trials. Not without reason did the ancient Simeon announce to Mary, the mother of Jesus, that prophecy which has been and still is true: Behold, this child is destined for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel, and for a sign that shall be contradicted" (Luke, ii, 34).

And Jesus Himself, when he grew up, clearly outlined the manner in which the world would have regarded—His person down through the succeeding centuries, with the mysterious words; "He who hears you, hears me" (ibid, X, 16), and with those others that the same evangelist relates: "He who is not with me is against me; and he who does not gather with me scatters" (ibid., i, 23)

The great problem confronting the world, after almost 2,000 years, remains unchanged. Christ is ever resplendent as the center of history and of life. men are either with Him and His Church, and then they enjoy light, goodness, order and peace, or else they are without Him or against Him, and deliberately against His Church, and then they give rise to confusion, to bitterness in human relations, and to constant dangers of fratricidal wars.

Ecumenical Councils, whenever they are assembled, are a solemn celebration of the union of Christ and His Church, and therefore they lead to the universal of radiation of truth, to the proper guidance of individual, domestic, and social life, to the strengthening of spiritual energies, in perennial uplifting towards real and everlasting good.

The testimony of this extraordinary magisterium of the Church in the various succeeding epochs of these twenty centuries of Christian history, stands before us collected in numerous and imposing volumes, which are a sacred patrimony of ecclesiastical archives, here in Rome and in the more noted libraries of the entire world.

With regard to the initiative for the great event which gathers us here, it will suffice to repeat in historical documentation our

personal account of the first sudden springing up in our heart and lips of the simple words "Ecumenical Council". We uttered these words in the presence of the Sacred College of Cardinals on that memorable January 25, 1959, the feast of the conversion of St. Paul, in the basilica dedicated to him. It was completely unexpected, like a flash of heavenly light, shedding sweetness in eyes and hearts; and at the same time it gave rise to great fervor throughout the world, in expectation of the celebration of the Council.

* * *

There have elapsed three years of laborious preparation, during which a wide and profound examination was made regarding modern conditions of faith and religious practice, and of Christian and especially Catholic vitality. These years have seemed to us a first sign, an initial gift of celestial grace.

Illuminated by the light of this Council, the Church, we confidently trust, will become greater in spiritual riches, and gaining the strength of new energies therefrom, she will look to the future without fear. In fact, by bringing herself up to date where required, and by the wise organization of mutual co-operation, the Church will make men, families, and peoples really turn their minds to heavenly things.

And thus the holding of the Council becomes a motive for wholehearted thanksgiving to the Giver of every good gift, in order to celebrate with joyous canticles the glory of Christ our Lord, the glorious and immortal king of ages and of peoples.

There is moreover, venerable brothers, another subject that is useful to propose for your consideration — namely, in order to render our joy more complete, we wish to narrate before this great assembly our assessment of the happy circumstances under which the Ecumenical Council commences.

In the daily exercise of our pastoral office, we sometimes have to listen, much to our regret, to voices of persons who, though burning with zeal, are not endowed with too much sense of discretion or measure. In these modern times they can see nothing but prevarication and ruin; they say that our era, in

comparison with past eras, is getting worse; and they behave as though they had learned nothing from history, which is nonetheless the teacher of life, and as though at the time of former Councils everything was a full triumph for the Christian idea and life, and for proper religious liberty.

We feel we must disagree with those prophets of gloom who are always forecasting disaster, as though the end of the world were at hand.

In the present order of things, Divine Providence is leading us to a new order of human relations, which, by men's own efforts and even beyond their very expectations, are directed toward the fulfillment of God's superior and inscrutable designs; and everything, even human adversity, leads to the greater good of the Church.

It is easy to discern this reality if we consider with attention the world of today, so busied with politics and controversies in the economic order as not to find time to attend to solitudes of the spiritual realm, with which the Church's magisterium is concerned. Such a way of acting is certainly not right, and must justly be disapproved.

It cannot be denied, however, that these new conditions of modern life have at least this advantage, that they have eliminated those innumerable obstacles by which at one time the sons of this world impeded the free action of the Church. In fact, it suffices to leaf even cursorily through the pages of ecclesiastical history to note clearly how the Ecumenical Councils themselves, while constituting a series of true glories for the Catholic Church, were often celebrated to the accompaniment of most serious difficulties and sufferings, because of the undue interference of civil authorities.

The princes of this world, indeed, sometimes in all sincerity intended thus to protect the Church, but more frequently this occurred not without spiritual damage and danger, since their interest therein was guided by the views of a selfish and perilous policy.

In this regard, we confess to you that we feel most lively sorrow over the fact that very many bishops, so dear to us, are

noticeable here today by their absence, because they are imprisoned for their faithfulness to Christ, or impeded by other restraints. The thought of them impels us to raise most fervent prayers to God. Nevertheless, we see today, not without great hopes and to our immense consolation, that the Church, finally freed from so many obstacles of a profane nature, such as trammelled her in the past, can, from this Vatican basilica, as if from a second apostolic cenacle, and through your intermediary, raise her voice resonant with majesty and greatness.

The greatest concern of the Ecumenical Council is this : that the sacred deposit of Christian doctrine should be guarded and taught more efficaciously. That doctrine embraces the whole of man, composed as he is of body and soul, and, since he is a pilgrim on this earth, commands him to tend always toward heaven.

This demonstrates how our mortal life is to be ordered, in such a way as to fulfill our duties as citizens of earth and of heaven, and thus to attain the aim of life as established by God. That is, today all men, whether taken singly or as united in society, have the duty of tending ceaselessly, during their lifetimes, toward the attainment of heavenly things, and to use only for this purpose the goods of earth, the employment of which must prejudice their eternal happiness.

The Lord has said : " Seek first the kingdom of God and his justice " (Matt. vi. 55). The word first expresses the direction in which our thoughts and energies must move. We must not, however, neglect the other words of this exhortation of our Lord, namely : " And all these things shall be given besides " (*ibid.*)

In reality, there always have been in the Church and are still today, those who, while seeking the practice of evangelical perfection with all their might, do not omit to make themselves useful to society. Indeed, it is from their constant example of life and their charitable undertakings that all that is highest and noblest in human society takes its strength and growth.

In order, however, that this doctrine influence the numerous fields of human activity, with reference to individuals, to families, and to social life, it is necessary first of all that the Church should never depart from the sacred patrimony of truth received from

the fathers. But at the same time she must ever look to the present, to new conditions and new forms of life introduced into the modern world, which have opened new avenues to the Catholic apostolate.

For this reason the Church has not been present inertly at the marvelous progress of the discoveries of human genius and has not been backward in evaluating them rightly. But, while following these developments, she does not neglect to admonish men so that, over and above sense-perceived things, they may raise their eyes to God, the source of all wisdom and all beauty, and may never forget the most serious command: "The Lord thy God shalt thou adore and Him only shalt thou serve" (Matt. iv. 10; Luke iv. 8), so that it may not happen that the fleeting fascination of visible things should impede true progress.

This having been established, it becomes clear how much is expected from the Council in regard to doctrine. That is, the 21st Ecumenical Council, which will draw upon the efficacious and important wealth of juridical, liturgical, apostolic, and administrative experiences, wishes to transmit doctrine, pure and integral, without any attenuation or distortion, which throughout 20 centuries, notwithstanding difficulties and contrasts, has become the common patrimony of men. It is a patrimony not well received by all, but always a rich treasure available to men of goodwill.

Our duty is not only to guard this precious treasure, as if we were concerned only with antiquity, but to dedicate ourselves with an earnest will and without fear to that work which our era demands of us, pursuing thus the path the Church has followed for 20 centuries.

The salient point of this Council is not, therefore, a discussion of one article or another of the fundamental doctrine of the Church, which has repeatedly been taught by the fathers and the ancient and modern theologians, and which is presumed to be well-known and familiar to all.

For this a Council was not necessary. But from the renewed, serene, and tranquil adhesion to all the teaching of the Church in its entirety and preciseness, as it still stands resplendent in the acts of the Councils of Trent and Vatican I, the Christian

Catholic, and apostolic spirit of the whole world expects a step forward toward a doctrinal penetration and a formation of consciences, in faithful and perfect conformity with the authentic doctrine, which, however, should be studied and expounded through the methods of research and through the literary forms of modern thought.

The substance of the ancient doctrine, of the *depositum fidei* is one thing, and another is the way in which it is presented; and it is this that must be taken into great consideration, with patience if necessary, everything being measured in the forms and proportions of a magisterium that is prevalently pastoral in character.

* * *

At the outset of Vatican Council II it is evident, as always, that the truth of the Lord will remain forever. We see, in fact, as one age succeeds the other, that the opinions of men follow one another and exclude each other, and errors often vanish as quickly as they arise, like the mist before the sun.

Ever has the Church opposed these errors. Frequently she has condemned them with the greatest severity. Nowadays, however, the spouse of Christ prefers to make use of the medicine of mercy rather than that of severity. She considers that she meets the needs of the present day by demonstrating the validity of her teaching rather than by condemnations.

Not, certainly, that there is a lack of fallacious teaching of opinions and dangerous concepts to be guarded against and dissipated, but they are so evidently in contrast with the right norm of honesty, and have produced such lethal fruits, that by now it would seem that men, of themselves, are inclined to condemn them, particularly those ways of life that despise God and His law, and rely on excessive confidence in technical progress and well-being based exclusively on the comforts of life.

Men are ever more deeply convinced of the paramount dignity of the human person and of his perfecting, as well as the duties that implies. Even more important, experience has taught men that violence inflicted on others, the might of arms and

political domination, are of no help at all in finding a happy solution to the grave problems that afflict them.

That being so, the Catholic Church, raising the torch of religious truth by means of this Ecumenical Council, desires to show herself to be the loving mother of all, benign, patient, full of mercy and goodness toward the children separated from her. To the human race, oppressed by so many aggressors, she says like Peter of old to the poor man who begged alms from him: "Silver and gold have I none, but what I have I give thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, arise and walk" (Act. vii, 6).

In other words, the Church does not offer to men of today riches that pass, does not promise them a merely earthly happiness, but she distributes to them the goods of divine grace which raising men to the dignity of sons of God, are most efficacious safeguards and aids toward a more human life. She opens the fountain of her life-giving doctrine, which allows men, enlightened by the light of Christ, to understand well what they really are, what is their lofty dignity and their purpose. And finally, through her children, she spreads everywhere the fullness of Christian charity than which nothing is more effective in eradicating the seeds of discord, nothing more efficacious in promoting concord, just peace, and the brotherly unity of all.

The Church's solicitude to forward and defend truth derives from the fact that, according to the plan of God, "who wishes all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth" (I Tim. ii, 4) men without the assistance of the whole of revealed doctrine cannot reach a complete and firm unity of minds, without which are associated true peace and eternal salvation.

Unfortunately, the entire Christian family has not yet fully attained this visible unity in truth.

The Catholic Church, therefore, considers it her duty to work actively so that there may be fulfilled the great mystery of the unity, which Jesus Christ invoked with fervent prayer from his heavenly Father on the eve of His sacrifice. She rejoices in peace, knowing well that she is intimately associated with that prayer, and then exults greatly at seeing that invocation extend its efficacy with salutary fruit even among those who are outside her fold.

Indeed, if one considers well this same unity that Christ implored for His Church, it seems to shine, as it were, with a triple ray of beneficent supernatural light : namely, the unity of Catholics among themselves, which must always be kept exemplary and most firm ; the unity of prayers and ardent desires with which those Christians separated from this Apostolic See aspire to be united with us, and the unity in esteem and respect for the Catholic Church which animates those who follow non-Christian religions.

* * *

In this regard, it is a source of considerable sorrow to see that the greater part of the human race — although all men who are born were redeemed by the blood of Christ — does not yet participate in those sources of divine grace that exist in the Catholic Church. Hence the Church, whose light illumines all, whose strength of supernatural unity redounds to the advantage of all humanity, is rightly described in these beautiful words of St. Cyprian :

“The Church, surrounded by divine light, spreads her rays over the entire earth. This light, however, is one and unique, and shines everywhere without causing any separation in the unity of the body. She extends her branches over the whole world by her fruitfulness. She sends ever farther afield her rivulets; nevertheless, the head is always one, the origin one, for she is the one mother, abundantly fruitful : we are born of her, are nourished by her milk, we live of her spirit ” (*De Catholicae Ecclesie Unitate*. 5)

Venerable brothers :

Such is the aim of the Ecumenical Council Vatican II, which, while bringing together the Church's best energies and striving to have men welcome more favorably the good tidings of salvation, prepares, as it were, and consolidates the path toward that unity of mankind which is required as a necessary foundation in order that the earthly city may be brought to the resemblance of that heavenly city, “where truth reigns, charity is the law, and whose extent is eternity” (cf. St. Augustine, Epistle 133. 3).

Now, "our voice is directed to you", venerable brothers in the episcopate. Behold, we are gathered together in this Vatican basilica upon which hinges the history of the Church, where heaven and earth are closely joined, here near the tomb of Peter and near so many of the tombs of our holy predecessors, whose ashes in this solemn hour seem to murmur in mystic exultation.

The Council now beginning rises in the Church like the day-break, a forerunner of most splendid light. It is now only dawn, and already, at this first announcement of the rising day, how much sweetness fills our heart. Everything here breathes sanctity and arouses great joy. Let us contemplate the stars, which with their brightness augment the majesty of this temple. These stars, according to the testimony of the Apostle John (Apoc. i, 20), you are. And with you we see shining around the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles the golden candelabra, that is, the churches which have been confided to you (*ibid*).

We see here with you the important personalities, present in an attitude of great respect and cordial expectation, having come together in Rome from the six continents to represent the nations of the world.

We might say that heaven and earth are united in the celebration of the Council: the saints of heaven, to protect our work, the faithful of the earth, continuing in prayer to the Lord, and you, seconding the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, in order that the work of all may correspond to the modern expectations and needs of the various peoples of the world. This requires of you serenity of mind, brotherly concord, moderation in proposals, dignity in discussion, and wisdom of deliberation.

God grant that you labor, and your work, to which look the eyes of all peoples and also the hope of the entire world, may abundantly fulfil the aspirations of all.

Almighty God, in Thee we place all our confidence, not trusting in our own strength. Look down benignly upon these pastors of Thy Church. May the light of Thy supernatural grace aid us in taking decisions, and in making laws. And graciously hear the prayers which we pour forth to Thee in unanimity of faith, of voice and of mind.

O Mary, help of Christians, help of Bishops, of whose love we have recently had particular proof in thy temple of Loreto, where we venerated the mystery of the Incarnation, dispose all things for a happy and propitious outcome and, with thy spouse St. Joseph, the holy apostles Peter and Paul, St. John the Baptist and St. John the Evangelist, intercede for us to God.

To Jesus Christ, our most amiable Redeemer, immortal king of peoples and of ages, be love, power and glory for ever and ever, Amen.

* * *

Welcome to Vatican Observers and Guests

H. E. Cardinal Bea.

In a address given at a reception for non-Catholic observers and guests at the Ecumenical Council, His Eminence, Augustin Cardinal Bea stressed the bond of Baptism which is "stronger than all our divisions". The Cardinal, who is president of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity which gave the reception, said that "Christians all over the world are daily becoming more aware of these bonds".

His Eminence welcomed the observers and guests, saying: "Instead of a long listing of your titles, which certainly I do respect, please allow me to address you with these simple but so profound words: 'My Brothers in Christ'... a greeting that plunges us immediately into the profound consciousness of the incommensurable grace of Baptism which has established bonds that are indestructible, stronger than all our divisions".

The Cardinal emphasized that these mutual bonds have led non-Catholic groups to send observers to the ecumenical council and the Pope to set up the Secretariat for Unity to aid the observers. He gave thanks to God that such a friendly meeting could take place and then added:

"True, this work is not complete. There are above all a good number of venerable Orthodox churches of the East which are

not officially represented. This fact is doubtlessly painful to both sides, for them and for us. Nevertheless, we must recognize that great efforts have been made by both sides, without completely arriving at the clearance of the large obstacles that came between them. There remains for us only to pray to the Divine Head of the Church that He multiply His mercies.

"Meanwhile, we shall exert ourselves to prevent our relations in Christ from suffering from it and so that these relations may not be affected by this setback. Above all, it is necessary that our faith in the irresistible efficacy of the grace of Christ and in the work of the Holy Spirit in all baptized persons remain unweakened".

Cardinal Bea assured his listeners that the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity would always be at their disposal.

"That is why", he continued, "I ask you to grant us complete confidence and thus to tell us very frankly — above all during the sessions especially organized for you by the Secretariat — everything that you dislike, to share with us your positive criticisms, your suggestions, your desires".

In acknowledgement of Cardinal Bea's welcome, Dr. Edmund Schlink, Lutheran faculty member of Germany's Heidelberg University and observer for the German Evangelical Church said that His Holiness Pope John XXIII "by the initiative of his heart has created a new atmosphere of openness in regard to the non-Roman churches".

"So far", he declared, there have been only meetings of individuals and small gatherings between Catholics and non-Catholics. We consider it great progress that these meetings should now have led to the one at this council which has an official character",

Dr. Schlink pointed out that observers have been given the same list of proposals as the council Fathers and now are offered the opportunity to comment on them, a fact which they deeply appreciate. He said that while there are still many obstacles to a full realization of Christian unity, there is now hope for a true dialogue between Catholics and non-Catholics.

"I am convinced", he concluded, "that divided Christianity has more in common when it comes to the substance of revealed

truth than would appear in the different versions of it. Which shows that the Bible belongs to all of us together and that much may be expected from continued interfaith co-operation in the development of Biblical studies". (NC)

Address Given at the Audience to the Observers at the Council

H. H. POPE JOHN XXIII.

Dear Gentlemen,

Our meeting today, which is so pleasant, is like a confidential family gathering. It is intended to be marked by respect and by simplicity.

The first word which rises from the heart is a prayer, a teaching which applies to all, drawn from Psalm 68 : *Benedictus Dominus per singulos dies : portat onera nostra Deus, salus nostra*. Blessed be the Lord every day : God bears our burdens, the God of our salvation.

In 1952, Pope Pius XII made an unforeseen and surprising gesture ; he asked me to become Patriarch of Venice. I told him that I did not need to reflect much before accepting. My own will had nothing to do with this proposal ; my soul had no desire to be directed towards this or that function or ministry rather than another. My episcopal motto was sufficient answer : *obedientia et pax !*

When therefore, after thirty years in the direct service of the Holy See, I prepared myself to start a new kind of life and to meet the people of Venice as their shepherd - and I guided them for six years - I again recalled these words of the Psalm, and meditated upon them : *portat onera nostra Deus* : God bears our burdens. He bears us as we are and with what we have : with His wealth in us and with our miseries.

The same thought was in my mind when I accepted the succession of Saint Peter four years ago, and I have thought of it in everything that has been done since, day after day, until the Council was announced and opened.

with regard to my own humble person, I do not like to refer to special inspirations. I hold to the sound doctrine of the church: it teaches that everything comes from God. It was in this perspective that I considered the idea of the Council, which has just opened on the 11th October, as an inspiration from God. That day I can assure you that I was deeply moved.

At this providential and historic hour, I was particularly aware of my duty: it consisted in meditation, prayer, and thanks to the Lord. However, from time to time my attention was directed towards so many sons and brothers. And as soon as it came to your group, to each of you, your presence gave me a sense of comfort.

Without wanting to anticipate the future, let us content ourselves today with stating the fact. *Benedictus Deus per singulos dies!* As for you, if you look into my heart you may find much more there than in what I say. How could I forget the ten years spent at Sofia? and the ten other years spent at Istanbul and Athens? They were twenty happy, well filled years, during which I made the acquaintance of venerable personalities and of young people full of generosity. I regarded them as my friends, even if my mission as representative of the Holy Father in the Near East did not directly concern them.

Then in Paris, which is one of the cross-roads of the world, (and this was particularly true after the last war), I had many meetings with Christians of different denominations.

Never, to my knowledge, had there been any confusion in principle between us, nor any disagreement on the plane of charity in the common work for which circumstances then called to help those who suffered. We did not "debate", we conversed: we did not discuss, we loved each other.

One day, a long time ago, I transmitted to a venerable old man, the prelate of an Eastern church which was not in communion with Rome, a medal of the pontificate of Pius XI. This gesture was intended as - and was - a simple act of friendly courtesy. A short time afterwards when this old man was on the point of closing his eyes to the light of this world, he asked that this medal be placed on his heart when he died. I saw him myself, and am still touched by the recollection.

I refer to this episode on purpose because, in its touching simplicity, it is like a wild flower which can be picked and given as the seasons return.

May the Lord always accompany our steps with His grace.

Your dear presence here, the emotion which fills my priest's heart – the heart of an *episcopus Ecclesiae Dei*, as I said on Thursday to the Assembly of the Council – the emotion of my fellow-workers, and your own I am sure, persuade me to confide in you the desire of my heart, which is burning to work and suffer for the hour to approach when Jesus' prayer at the Last Supper shall be answered. But the Christian virtue of patience must not injure the virtue of prudence, which is also fundamental.

Once again I repeat: *Benedictus Deus pro singulis diebus*: Blessed be the Lord every day, For today let that be sufficient for us. The Catholic Church is at work, serene and generous, and you are at work in your function as observers, with a renewed, benovolent attention.

May all this work, and all of us, receive the grace from heaven which inspires and moves the heart, and crowns merit.

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REPLY TO THE WELCOME

Prof. Schlink of University of Herdelberg,

BY DR. EDMUND SCHLINK AT THE RECEPTION.

Your Eminence,

Permit me, on behalf of the Observers and Guests, to express our sincere thanks for the extremely friendly way in which you have received us. In so doing we are thinking not only of the present reception, but of all the cordiality and help which you, and the members of your Secretariat (especially Monseigneur Willebrands) have given to each of us from the very first moment. I was all the more pleased to accept the task of expressing our

thanks, on behalf of the Observers and Guests, because-together with my Anglican friend Canon Pawley-I have already been privileged for a long time to experience your kindness.

Most of the Observers have been sent here by churches which are members of the World Council of Churches, and the ecumenical movement is also familiar to the Guests here. In that movement we have experienced how churches, which had hitherto held aloof from one another, have entered into a genuine dialogue, and arrived at a new understanding and a mutual exchange of thought, so that it has been possible to establish fellowship and co-operation. The contacts with the Roman Catholic Church have hitherto been restricted almost entirely to meetings between individuals or small groups. We regard it as a great step forward that the meeting here at the Vatican Council now has an official character; we realise that it is by no means to be taken for granted that we should receive the same "Schemata" as the delegates to the Council, and that Your Eminence should also give us an opportunity to express our views of these "Schemata". We realise that we owe this opportunity to His Holiness the Pope himself, who - through the prompting of his own heart - has introduced a new atmosphere of openness towards the non-Roman churches. May we request you to convey our respectful and sincere thanks to His Holiness on this account, and also our thanks for his friendly welcome at the audience on Saturday evening.

Of course, all who are gathered here realise the tremendous, deep rooted obstacles which separate us from one another. We would not be divided were it not for the fact that every one of us feels that God Himself has deeply obligated us to our own church, and we would not be truly furthering unity in Christ if we failed to take this fact seriously. But I should like to draw attention to two points, which strengthen the hope of a genuine dialogue between us all.

The first is a thought which your Eminence has frequently expressed in your address during the last two years, and which now recurs in the Pope's allocution at the opening of the Council: the thing that lays absolute obligations upon us in all that we say and do is the revealed truth. At the same time, however a distinc-

tion must be drawn between the substance of doctrine and the way in which it is formulated (*modus enuntiandi*). I am convinced that divided Christendom has more in common than is apparent at first sight from its different formulations.

The second cause for encouragement is the fact that Your Eminence is himself a prominent biblical scholar, and that biblical exegesis in the Roman Church (especially since the Encyclical *Divino afflante Spiritu*) has received a tremendous impetus. As the Bible is shared by us all, and as biblical exegesis today is no longer conceivable without the interconfessional co-operation of the experts, we have reason to have great hopes of the further development of biblical exegesis.

In conclusion let me add that the prayer for the Holy Spirit, with which the Council opened, was voiced by all of us, and that we shall continue to pray for His guidance throughout the proceedings of the Council.

THE CONCLUDING ADDRESS,

H. H. POPE JOHN XXIII.

Venerable Brethren,

The first session of the work of the Council, begun on the feast of the Divine Motherhood of Mary, comes to an end on today's feast of the Immaculate Conception in the radiance of the grace of her who is God's Mother and our own. She provides the mystic link between today's ceremony and that of the splendid opening of the Council on 11th October, whilst her two feasts sounds the keynote of our prayer of thanksgiving.

The deep significance of these two feasts is all the more striking when one reflects that our Predecessor, Pius IX, the Pope of the Immaculate Conception, inaugurated the first Vatican Council on this same feast day of our Lady. It is good to commemorate these happy coincidences, which, in the light of history help one to recognize how many of the Church's great events to take place

in Mary's presence, in testimony and assurance of her motherly protection.

The Council, in its reality; is an act of faith in God, of obedience to His laws, of sincere endeavour to correspond with the plan of Redemption according to which the Word was made flesh of the Virgin Mary. And as today we pay reverence to the most pure stem of the root of Jesus from which the flower has sprung "the flower from his root shall rise up". our hearts are filled with a joy that is all the greater in that we see this flower blossoming in the season of Advent.

Now that the bishops of the five continents are returning from this nave to their beloved dioceses to continue the pastoral service and guidance of their flocks. We should like to dwell a little on what has so far been done and encouraged and enlightened by this, to map out the future whilst waiting for the fulfilment of what yet remains to be done to bring this great enterprise to a happy conclusion.

We will consider these three points: the beginning of the Ecumenical Council; its continuance; and the fruits which are expected of it in the way of spreading faith and holiness and apostolic activity in the Church and in modern society.

1) The opening of the Ecumenical Council is still vivid in our minds,—the vast assembly of bishops of the entire Catholic world, a gathering unique in history. The one, holy, catholic, and apostolic Church was revealed to all humanity in the splendour of her perennial mission, in the solidity of her organization, in the persuasiveness and attractiveness of her teaching. Furthermore it is with pleasure that We recall the delegations from various nations representing their governments in the solemn inauguration of the Council. On this subject We would once again like to express Our thanks for the way in which the whole world has been an admiring witness of these events, and for the reports that have come to Us from all over the world in expressions of respect, esteem, and gratitude.

Since this is the end of the first phase of the work begun on that memorable day, the 11th of October, it is only fitting to reflect on what has been accomplished.

The first session was like a slow and solemn introduction to the great work of the Council—a generous willingness to enter into the heart and substance of Our Lord's plan. It was necessary for brothers, gathered together from afar around a common hearth, to make each other's closer acquaintance; it was necessary for them to look at each other squarely in order to understand each other's hearts; they had necessarily to describe their own experiences, reflecting the conditions of the apostolate under the most varied climates and circumstances, in order that there should be a thoughtful and profitable interchange of views on pastoral matters.

In such a vast gathering it is understandable that a few days were needed to arrive at an agreement on a matter on which in all charity there existed with good reason sharply divergent views. But even this has a providential place in the triumph of truth, for it has shown to all the world the holy liberty that the sons of God enjoy in the Church.

It was not by chance that the first *schema* to be considered was on the sacred Liturgy, which defines the relationship between man and God. Since it is the highest form of relationship, it must be based on the solid foundation of Revelation and the apostolic teaching, so as to proceed for the good of souls with that broadness of vision free from the superficiality and haste which sometimes characterize the relationships between men.

And then five more *schemata* were presented, a fact which alone makes one realize the extent of the work thus far completed. Indeed it is right to conclude that a good beginning has been made.

2) *Continuation of the work*: And now, Venerable Brethren, one's glance turns trustingly to that phase of the work, seemingly silent, but nonetheless important, which opens up during these nine months of interval after your return to your sees.

Meanwhile it pleases Us to contemplate each of you in your separate diocese, and a deep satisfaction fills Our heart, for We know that, returning from Rome, you bring to your Christian peoples the shining torch of confidence and of charity, and that you will remain united with Us in fervent prayer. This calls to mind the words of Ecclesiasticus, referring to the High priest Simon: "...he himself stood by the altar, and about him was the

ring of his brethren" (Ecclesiasticus 50:13) It is thus that Our activity continues now, in this mutual blending of prayers and wills.

Today's celebration does not bring the work to an end, rather the work that awaits all of us is of the greatest importance, which certainly was not the case during the recesses of previous Councils. The conditions of modern life, however, make it easy to have rapid communications in all types of business, personal and apostolic.

That activity will continue is made clear by the institution of a new Commission composed of members of the Sacred College and of the Episcopate and representing the Universal Church. This Commission's duty is to pursue and direct the work during these months and, along with the various conciliar commissions, to lay the firm foundations for the happy final outcome of the ecumenical sessions. Thus the Council really remains open during the next nine months of suspension of the ecumenical sessions properly so called.

Each Bishop, although preoccupied with his pastoral administration, should continue to study and investigate the *schemata* provided and whatever else may be sent later. In this way the session which will begin in the month of September of next year—at the new, hoped-for meeting in Rome of all the Fathers of the Church of God—will proceed more surely, more steadily and with greater speed, thanks to the experience of these two months of 1962, so that there is hope that the conclusion awaited by all Our faithful children may be reached in the glory of the Incarnate Son of God in the joy of Christmas in the centenary year of the Council of Trent.

The vision of this grand prospect, which reveals the whole course of the coming year so rich in promise, stirs up in the heart a more ardent hope for the realization of the great goals for which We have convoked the Council: namely that "the Church, founded of faith, strengthened in hope, and more ardent in charity, may flourish with new and youthful vigour, and, fortified by holy ordinances, may be more energetic and swift to spread the kingdom of Christ". (Letter addressed to the German Episcopate, January 11, 1961)

3) *Fruits of the Council* : Even if the stage of putting the Council into effect is not imminent, — for that we must wait until the work of the Council is over — it is nonetheless consoling to turn one's gaze towards the benefits that are anticipated : benefits for the Catholic Church ; hopes for our brethren who treasure the name of Christian ; renewed attention on the part of all those countless children of ancient and glorious civilizations, which the light of Christianity does not desire to destroy, but in which she could — as has happened at other times in history — develop the richest seeds of religious vigour and human progress.

Our heart casts its glance in that direction, venerable brethren, and We know also that your heart has the same solicitude as Our own.

It will then be a question of extending to all departments of the life of the Church, social questions included, whatever the Conciliar Assembly may decide, and to apply its norms to them with "generous assent and prompt fulfilment" (Prayer for the Ecumenical Council). This most important phase will see pastors united in a gigantic effort of preaching sound doctrine and applying the laws which they themselves desire, and for this task will be called forth the collaboration of the forces of the diocesan and regular clergy, of the congregations of religious women, of the Catholic laity with all its attributes and potential, in order that the acts of the Fathers may be seconded by the most joyous and faithful response.

It will be a "new Pentecost" indeed which will cause the Church to renew her interior riches and to extend her maternal care in every sphere of human activity ; it will be a new advance of the Kingdom of Christ in the world, an elevated and persuasive reaffirmation of the good news of Redemption, a clarion call of God's Kingship, of the brotherhood of men in charity, of the peace promised on earth to men of goodwill in accordance with God's good pleasure.

These, Venerable Brethren, are the feelings of Our heart, which issue in hope and prayer. Now that the labours of this first session of the Council are over, you are going back to your own countries and to the precious flocks committed to your care.

As We now wish you "Godspeed", We desire that you should be Our faithful messengers in expressing to your priests and people the greatness of Our affection. On this occasion there come to mind the words of greeting and hope which Pius IX addressed one day to the bishops of the First Vatican Council: "See, Brethren, what a blessed and joyful thing it is to go forward in harmony in the house of God. May you always so progress. And as Our Lord Jesus Christ gave peace to His apostles, so I also, His unworthy Vicar, give you peace in His name. Peace, as you know, casts out fear; peace shuts its ears to what is said without real knowledge. May this peace be with you all the days of your life". (Mansi, 1896-70, p. 765, 158).

In these past months of companionship here together we have experienced the savour of these words of Pius IX. There is much yet to be done, but you know that the Supreme Shepherd will have loving care of you in the pastoral activity which you exercise in your own dioceses, an activity which will not be dissociated from the preoccupations of the Council. In drawing your attention to the threefold activity, which is the task of all, it was Our intention to stir up your enthusiasm: the glorious opening of the Council provided the first introduction to the great enterprise; in the coming months the work will go on unflaggingly, as also will earnest reflection, so that the Ecumenical Council may be able to bestow upon the family of mankind those fruits of faith, hope and charity which are so ardently expected from it. This threefold character clearly shows the unique importance of the Council.

A heavy responsibility therefore rests upon our shoulders, but God Himself will sustain us on the way.

May the Immaculate Virgin be with us always; may Joseph, her most chaste spouse, Patron of the Ecumenical Council, whose name from today shines in the Canon of the Mass all over the world, accompany us on our journey in the same way that he accompanied the Holy Family with his support in accordance with God's will. And with them Saints Peter and Paul, and all the Apostles with John the Baptist, and all the Popes, bishops, and doctors of God's Church.

We are in this Basilica of St. Peter in the centre of Christianity, at the tomb of the Prince of the Apostles. But with pleasure We recall that the cathedral of the diocese of Rome is the Lateran

Basilica, the mother and foundation of all churches, dedicated to Christ, the Divine Saviour. To Him, therefore, Who is the immortal and invisible King of all ages and all peoples be glory and power forever (cfr. I Tim. 1, 17; Apoc. 1, 6).

In this hour of heartfelt joy it is as if the heavens are opened above our heads and that the splendour of the heavenly court shines out upon us, filling us with superhuman certainty and a supernatural spirit of faith, joy and profound peace. In this light, as We look forward to your return, We salute all of you, venerable Brothers, "with a holy kiss" (cf. Rom, 16, 16), whilst at the same time We call down upon you the most abundant blessings of Our Lord, of which the Apostolic Blessing is the pledge and promise.

THE WORLD COUNCIL NEWS.

The 100 member Central Committee of the WC met in Paris from Aug. 7-17. Roman Catholic observers were also present. The opening session was greeted by M. Couve de Murville, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the French Government and by Pastor Charles Westphal, president of the Protestant Federation of France.

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Seven new churches were approved for membership in the WCC by the Central Committee meeting in Paris. This will bring to 201 the Protestant, Orthodox, and Anglican Churches in the membership. The new churches include five from Soviet Union, one which has its headquarters in Lebanon, and one in S. Africa.

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The Armenian Church with head quarters in Etchmiodzin, Russia, which has a total membership of 4,500,000, with 1,400,000, living outside the USSR. The Armenian Church of the Catholicate of Cilicia with a membership of 498,000 is another new member church. It covers dioceses in the Middle East, Greece, and N. America.

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A 10-member delegation from the Faith and Order Commission of the W C C made a visit to U S S R Aug. 22- Sept. 1. The purpose of the visit was to hold theological conversations and to acquaint theologians there with the work of the W C C commission.

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The WCC is planning a conference on Faith and Order to be held in Montreal, Canada on July 12-26. Some 500 leading Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox theologians from all continents will meet there. The conference will deal with theological and organizational barriers to unity. Across the world 40 regional groups are helping to prepare for the Montreal Conference. No other world conference on Faith and Order has received such wide study by local groups in advance.

HERE AND THERE IN CHRISTENDOM.

Africa. The first all African Youth Conference was held in Nairobi last December. Delegates from 40 African countries and 50 fraternal delegates from 30 countries of Asia, Europe and S. America took part. The theme of the assembly was "Freedom under the Cross".

America. The House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church with a membership of 3½ million in its annual meeting called for an end to racial segregation.

Ceylon. A recommendation that would have allocated 74 per cent of admission to Ceylon University to Buddhist students was rejected by a committee appointed by the government's Minister of Education.

The Rev. C. Wickremasingh 35, has been made Bishop of Karunogala succeeding, Bp. Lekdasa de Mel, now Metropolitan of India. The new Bishop was a student of Keble College, Oxford and Ely Theological Seminary.

England. Dr. Hewlett Johnson, Dean of Canterbury

widely known as the Red Dean due to his communist sympathies, has just retired in his 89th year.

France. A church of the Reconciliation has been inaugurated at the Protestant Community of Taize, near Cluny, France. More than 3000 Christians from many different nations attended the function. For many years the community of Taize has held its service in the Roman Catholic parish Church. In the crypt of the new Church reserved for that purpose, a Roman Catholic mass was celebrated by Bishop of Autun. On a Sunday evening service of the Protestant Community several Roman Catholics including Bishops were present,

Greece. The Ecumenical Patriarch will issue invitations to the 1000th anniversary of the founding of the monastery of Mt. Athos to representatives of all Orthodox Churches round the world.

India. The Supreme Court has upheld the absolute right of religious and linguistic minorities to establish and administer educational institutions.

The possibility of establishing a centre for conference and retreats for Churches and Christian organizations in S. India is being investigated by a special committee headed by Dr. J. R. Chandran of Bangalore.

Lectures in Christian Unity were held in Bangalore, under the joint Roman Catholic-Protestant auspices. Sponsors were the Legion of Mary and the National Christian Council.

The Church of S. India has 1,134,205 baptised Christians 801 presbyters in pastorates and 131 students training for ministry.

Japan. The January issue of the Roman Catholic publication, *The Japan Missionary Bulletin* on Ecumenism and the Council was largely prepared by non-Catholic scholars. The issue was presented by its editor, Fr. J. J. Spae "as proof of our respect, love, and gratitude towards our non-Catholic brethren."

New Guinea. Some thousand half-wild tribesmen, who resented Christian influence, attacked the Baptist mission station there and killed 80 nationals.

Norway. In proportion to its population Norway distributes more Bibles than any other country. The second place is for

Finland. For every 1000 inhabitants of Norway more than 37 Bibles were distributed and for Finland 34.

New Zealand. 140 representatives of New Zealand churches met at Christ church last November. Conference speakers were D. T. Niles of Ceylon and M. M. Thomas of Bangalore, India.

Rumania. A four-member WCC delegation has visited Rumania. The members were Dr. F. C. Fry, Dr. Hooft, Archbishop Iakov and Bishop Emilianos. The delegation praised the vitality of the Rumanian Churches.

U. S. S. R. The Arch bishop of Canterbury made a five day visit to Russia. In a joint communique Dr. Ramsey and Patriarch Alexei recommended "exchanges of visits between theologians, priests and students of the two Churches".

The Silver Jubilee of the consecration of Patriarch Alexei is celebrated in Moscow.

A 13 member delegation from the National Council of Churches in U. S. A. paid a three-week visit to the Soviet Union. They said that they had been deeply impressed by the vitality of the Russian Orthodox Church.

NEWS AND NOTES OF THE MALANKARA CHURCH.

H. H. the Catholicos, the head of the Church, has celebrated his 90th birthday recently. Greetings were extended to him from all round.

At the invitation of the Russian Orthodox Church two bishops of the Church, their Graces Mar Athanasios and Mar Philaxinos have gone to Moscow to take part in the Jubilee Celebration of H. H. Patriarch Alexei.

H. H. the Armenian Catholicos of Etchmiadzin will be visiting the Syrian Church shortly.

As the result of the growing consciousness of the Syrian Church to help the innumerable sick and suffering in their midst, a healing rally was held at Kottayam at which doctors and nurses of the Church rendered a week's voluntary service to redeem them from their suffering.

The 63rd anniversary of the Syrian Christian Congress was celebrated with great eclat at Mt. Tabor Nagar, Pathanapuram. H. G. Mar Dionysius hoisted the flag with a felicitous short speech. Four sessions were held in two days of the Celebrations—Education and Finance, Women's, Intercommunal Harmony and the anniversary proper. The anniversary was presided over by the retired Dist. Judge Sri. K. Koruthu, the Education and Finance by ex-M. P. Sri. N. Alexander, Women's by Dr. Rebecca, the intercommunal Harmony was inaugurated by Sri. Mannathu Padmanabhan and presided over by Sri. A. A. Rahim. Several resolutions were passed which were communicated to the authorities concerned. For next year the Rev. Dr. C. T. Eapen was re-elected as the president and Mr. P. K. Kurien as the General Secretary.

At a meeting of the executive committee of the Orthodox Youth Organization a proposal has been made to start a youth centre for the church.

To give evidence to the select committee of the Christian Marriage Bill Sri. M. G. Mathew, M. Abraham and E. John Kuruvilla have gone to New Delhi. Substantial changes have to be made in the bill to make it satisfactory to the Syrian Church.

At a meeting of the Managing Committee of the Orthodox Syrian Church measures have been adopted to make the working of the Catholicate office more effective.

At the last annual conference of the Orthodox Syrian Christian Movement held at the Union College, Alwaye, Fr. Bede Griffiths of the Roman Catholic Church was one of the chief speakers. Fr. Zachariah of Mt. Tabor Asram conducted the retreat.

Following the Second Vatican Council, a number of joint mass meetings have been held here at which Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Mar Thoma and Anglican Bishops have shared the same platform.

Fr. M. V. George of the Orthodox Church has written a book called, *I Believe*, which has been published by the National Christian Council of India

Fathers K. Philipos and V. C. Samuel have gone to Montreal,

Canada, to take part in the Faith and Order Committee meeting of the W. C. C. held there.

The 38th anniversary of the Servants of the Cross, a missionary organization of the Syrian Church, will be held at Kothamangalam. So far the society has baptised 21,326 outcastes, 167 last year. Annual income was Rs. 16,600.

BOOK REVIEWS

The Unity of Christians. By Augustine Cardinal Bea, Geoffrey Chapman, 21 S.

This Book is a collection of speeches and writings by H. E. Cardinal Bea, the President of the Secretariat at Vatican for Christian Unity set up by H. H. the late Pope. Originally written in Italian it has now been translated into English under the supervision of the generous worker for unity Fr. Leeming, S. J.

An Introduction is contributed by Archbishop O' Hara Apostolic delegate in Great Britain. In this he says that in the hackneyed phrase "separated brethren" the emphasis should be shifted from the first word to the second. He described the happenings in St. Peters during the Vatican Council—

The general meetings began with Low Mass attended by 2500 Fathers of the Council gathered from the ends of the earth. There were different celebrants each day hailing from a diversity of places as Rotterdam, Nagasaki, Florence, Philadelphia, Sargossa and Mexico City. All continents were represented. One Mass was said by the Negro Bishop of Kovpela. On certain days the Byzantine and Ambrosian rites were used.

There were 38 non-Roman Catholic observers. At a reception given to them, Cardinal Bea addressed them as "dear brothers in Christ", a title justified by the bond of Baptism. In this connection it may be remembered that the Anglican converts are rebaptised.

Cardinal Bea makes no mention of the possibility of the Mass in vernacular or, communion in both kinds. He also does not mention the fact brought out in the discussion that the

Eastern Churches are closer to the traditions of our Lord and the Apostles and that they are not any younger than Rome.

Some hopeful statements are also found in its pages. "The New Testament... is the rule of faith and life for all those who call themselves Christians". 'By heretic and schismatic the Church only means those who formally and consciously choose to be such'. There is no reason in principle why Roman Catholics should not be associated with the World Council of Churches, which does not hold doctrines irreconcilable with Catholic dogma.

The author also points out that in 1870 non-Romanists dismissed the idea of taking part in the Council as merely a papist concern, while the attitude is very different this time. The Archbishop of Canterbury has praised the charity and good will of Pope John saying, 'Where you have charity the results are incalculable. The book is to be welcomed by all Christians for its generous and kind spirit.

IN MEMORIUM.

Archbishop Athenagoras. Exarch of the Ecumenical Patriarchate for Central and Western Europe, died in London at the age of 78. The Archbishop, a former President of the W C C, spent many years in the U. S. In 1938 he was consecrated Bishop of Boston. In 1951 he was named W C president succeeding the late Archbishop Germanos. He exercised his influence in making the ecumenical movement better known in the Orthodox churches. May light perpetual shine upon this chief shepherd.

Dr. Paul Devanandon. In the passing of Dr. Devanandon the Indian Christian Community has lost one of its distinguished sons. He passed away at 61, while attending a conference at Dehra Dun by a severe heart attack.

After obtaining his doctorate in Christian Theology, he taught for several years at the United Theological College at Bangalore. For a short period he served the Council of Y M C A-s in India as the Director of their Department of Literature. He was a founder of the Christian Institute for the study of Religion and Society which came into existence in 1957. He also taught at Selly Oak College, Birmingham and the Union Theological Seminary,

New York. He was scheduled to teach at the International Christian University, Tokyo.

May his soul rest in peace.

M. P. Cheriyan—It is with great sorrow that we place on record the passing of Mr. M. P. Cheriyan at the early age of 51. He was an outstanding planter of Malabar who willingly contributed his substance for the good of his church and country. He also took an active interest in politics.

May his soul rest in peace.

FORM IV

(See Rule 8)

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Signature of Publisher,

The Rev. Dr. C. T. EAPEN,

Secretary,

The Fellowship of St. Thomas and St. Paul.

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The Fellowship aims at bringing together the members of the Eastern Churches in the sacred bond of prayer, fellowship, study and service with a view to pave the way for their reunion. Members of other Churches, interested in the reunion of Christendom, may also become members of the organization. The work of the Fellowship should be fostered by the formation of small groups in different parts of the world. An intercession leaflet for the use of the Fellowship Groups is available. All interested are requested to enroll themselves as members by communicating to the Secretary.

The Star of the East will be the organ of the Fellowship to which articles and letters are invited.

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